
Report to Emergency Decision Making Forum

Date of Meeting: 10 April 2020

Subject: Licensing of taxi and private hire cars

Report by: Lindsay Thomson

1.0 Issue

- 1.1. There are a number of considerations which will require to be addressed in the next few weeks in terms of Clackmannanshire Council's approach to civic licencing. Some of these will be informed by the Coronavirus Scotland Act which came into force on 7 April 2020.
- 1.2. This paper considers one particular issue which is the annual and six monthly testing of cars. There are currently 6 vehicles which require to be tested this month and the testing period begins on 14 April. The Council's Fleet Manager has recently advised that it will be extremely difficult to carry out these tests at Kelliebank due to a lack of capacity at this time. In addition this process would require the reception at Kilncraigs to open to receive payment for the test. This would also be undesirable.
- 1.3. The Clackmannanshire representative of the Scottish Taxi Federation (this organisation does not cover private hire drivers) has advised that there is currently a very limited number of taxis operating in Clackmannanshire and they are only taking passengers to workplaces where required. He has also indicated that he would not wish drivers who are currently self isolating with personal or family member symptoms, staying at home with underlying health conditions and/or shielding to have to leave home to comply with this aspect of the licensing regime.

2.0 Options and Impacts

2.1 Option 1

(1) To suspend all vehicle testing between 10 April 2020 and 30 June 2020 for all taxi and private hire plates expiring up to and including 30 June 2020 (impact on 23 cars) and

(2) to delegate authority to the Senior Manager Legal & Governance in consultation with the Civil Licensing Standards Officer to put in place a process to carry out testing on the 23 cars which will be affected by the suspension after the testing process is reinstated.

Impact

There will be a temporary reduction in the assurance that the public can take in relation to taxi and private hire car drivers having six monthly and annual checks through the Council.

This is mitigated by the restricted number of taxis and private hire cars operating currently and the reduced mileage those cars are doing. The school transport contract is not currently running so there will be no impact on the safety of children. There will be a reminder issued to all operators that there is an expectation that cars should still be maintained to the required standard.

The limited capacity at Kelliebank will be retained for essential Council vehicles which are required to assist in service provision.

There is a cost pressure associated with the testing process which may be difficult for taxi drivers to meet at the moment given their reduced income. This option would also result in a loss of income for the Council at this time (approximately £1150), although it is anticipated that this income will be made up later in the year when testing recommences.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the EDMF agree option 1

4.0 Implementation

Task	Officer	Date
Update website with information	LT	ASAP
Communicate with taxi federation representative	LT	ASAP
Monitor impact of change	LT	Ongoing
Agree a process for testing catch up	LT and PF	From w/c 13 April 2020

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. *Financial Details*

- 5.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes x
- 5.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes x

6.0 Exempt Reports

- 6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No x

6.0 Legality

- 6.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes X

Author(s)

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